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TO: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Attn: Ms. Margaret Stevens
Fax No.: 571-273-0553

DATE: June 28, 2006

FROM: Susie Hubka
Assistant to Michael R. Schacht

PAGES: 11 (cover sheet included)

Re: Application Serial No. 10/791,482

Thanks for your call.

As requested, attached is a copy of the RCE and Amendment as filed on April 4, 2006.

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PTO/SB/30 (04-05)

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**Request
for
Continued Examination (RCE)
Transmittal**

Address to:
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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Application Number | 10/791,482 |
| Filing Date | 03/02/2004 |
| First Named Inventor | Lester R. Greer, Jr. |
| Art Unit | 3677 |
| Examiner Name | Jack W. Lavinder |
| Attorney Docket Number | P214529 |

This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114 of the above-identified application. Request for Continued Examination (RCE) practice under 37 CFR 1.114 does not apply to any utility or plant application filed prior to June 8, 1995, or to any design application. See Instruction Sheet for RCEs (not to be submitted to the USPTO) on page 2.

1. **Submission required under 37 CFR 1.114** Note: If the RCE is proper, any previously filed unentered amendments and amendments enclosed with the RCE will be entered in the order in which they were filed unless applicant instructs otherwise. If applicant does not wish to have any previously filed unentered amendment(s) entered, applicant must request non-entry of such amendment(s).
- a. ☐ Previously submitted. If a final Office action is outstanding, any amendments filed after the final Office action may be considered as a submission even if this box is not checked.
- i. ☐ Consider the arguments in the Appeal Brief or Reply Brief previously filed on _____
- ii. ☐ Other _____
- b. ☒ Enclosed
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- iii. ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)
- ii. ☐ Affidavit(s)/ Declaration(s)
- iv. ☐ Other _____
2. **Miscellaneous**
- Suspension of action on the above-identified application is requested under 37 CFR 1.103(c) for a
- a. ☐ period of _____ months. (Period of suspension shall not exceed 3 months; Fee under 37 CFR 1.17(i) required)
- b. ☐ Other _____
3. **Fees**
- The RCE fee under 37 CFR 1.17(e) is required by 37 CFR 1.114 when the RCE is filed. The Director is hereby authorized to charge ~~the following fees~~ any underpayment of fees, or credit any overpayments, to
- a. ☒ Deposit Account No. 502099. I have enclosed a duplicate copy of this sheet.
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- ii. ☐ Extension of time fee (37 CFR 1.136 and 1.17)
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- b. ☒ Check in the amount of \$ 790 enclosed
- c. ☐ Payment by credit card (Form PTO-2038 enclosed)

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| SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED | | | |
| Signature | <i>Michael R. Schacht</i> | Date | April 4, 2006 |
| Name (Print/Type) | Michael R. Schacht | Registration No. | 33,550 |

| | | | |
|--|--------------------|------|---------------|
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| Signature | <i>Susie Hubka</i> | Date | April 4, 2006 |
| Name (Print/Type) | Susie Hubka | | |

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.114. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

| | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|-----------------|-------------------|
| Applicant: | Lester R. Greer, Jr. et al. |) | Examiner: | Lavinder, Jack W. |
| Serial No.: | 10/791,482 |) | Art Unit: | 3677 |
| Filed: | 03/02/2004 |) | Attorneys Ref.: | P214529 |
| Title: | CLIP SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR SHEET MATERIALS |) | | |

REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION AND SUBMISSION
UNDER 37 CFR 1.114

Mail Stop RCE
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This Request for Continued Examination (RCE) follows the final Office Action mailed January 5, 2006. Enclosed is a check for \$790 for the RCE large entity filing fee. If any further fee or charge is due, please charge this fee to Deposit Account No. 502099.

Please amend the application as described herein.

REMARKS

This Request for Continued Examination is filed in response to the final Office Action mailed on January 5, 2006, in connection with this case. In that Office Action, the Examiner allowed claim 14 but rejected claims 1-13.

By this Amendment, claims 1-13 have been canceled, and claims 15-30 are newly presented. Claim 15 recites a clip assembly, while claim 23 recites a method of attaching a structure to a sheet material. The Applicant respectfully submits that the

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apparatus of claim 15 and the method of claim 23 distinguish the present invention over U.S. Patent No. 3,049,782 to Hawie and U.S. Patent No. 5,388,313 to Cameron, taken alone or in combination.

Submitted herewith is a document (entitled Exhibit A - Listing of All Claims and Amendments (04-04-2006)) containing a listing of the claims as currently presented. The attached Listing contains the text of each pending claim, along with any amendments made hereby (illustrated using strikethrough and underlining) and the status of each pending claim.

Given the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that currently pending claims 14-30 are in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested. If there is any matter which could be expedited by consultation with the Applicant's attorney, such would be welcome. The Applicant's attorney can normally be reached at the telephone number below.

Signed at Bellingham, County of Whatcom, State of Washington this 4th day of April, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Lester R. Greer, Jr.

By Michael R. Schacht

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING
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I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop RCE Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

Signature:

Susie Hubka

Print Name:

Susie Hubka

Date:

April 4, 2006

EXHIBIT A
LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS AND AMENDMENTS
(04-04-2006)

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (previously presented)

14. A clip for sheet materials comprising:
- a clip member defining a hinge portion, first and second finger portions extending from the hinge portion, and a ratchet portion formed on at least one of the first and second finger portions, where the clip member is made of resilient material such that the clip member may be deformed from a normally open configuration into a closed position, and
 - the first and second finger portions do not engage each other when the clip member is in the open configuration and the first and second finger portions engage each other when the clip member is in the closed position; and
 - a collar member defining a latch portion, a lever portion, a latch opening, and a housing interior, where the collar member is made of resilient material such that applying a force to the lever portion causes the collar member to deform from a normally engaged configuration to a disengaged configuration, and the latch portion extends into the housing interior through the latch opening when the collar member is in the engaged configuration and is withdrawn from the housing interior through the latch opening when the collar member is in the disengaged configuration; whereby
 - the clip member extends through the housing interior such that when the collar member is in a first position relative to the clip member, the clip member is in the open configuration;
 - when the collar member is in a second position relative to the clip member, the collar member acts on the clip member to place the clip member in the closed configuration; and

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when the collar member is in the engaged configuration, the latch portion engages the ratchet portion to allow movement of the collar member towards the second position and inhibit movement of the collar member towards the first position, and
when the collar member is in the disengaged configuration, the collar member may move between the first and second positions; and
the first and second finger portions define first and second gripping portions, respectively;
at least one of the first and second gripping portions defines a line notch adapted to receive an edge line of the sheet material; and
at least one of the first and second gripping portions defines a line tooth; whereby the line tooth defines at least a portion of a line projection adapted to engage the edge line of the sheet material;
the first and second gripping portions define first and second line notches, respectively;
the first and second gripping portions define first and second line teeth, respectively; and
the first and second line teeth define a line projection adapted to engage the edge line of the sheet material.

Claim 15 (new)

15. A clip assembly for sheet materials comprising:
a clip member defining a hinge portion, first and second finger portions extending from the hinge portion, first and second cam surfaces formed on the first and second finger portions, respectively, and a ratchet portion formed on at least one of the first and second finger portions;
a collar member defining a housing portion, a latch portion, a latch opening, and a housing interior, where the latch portion defines a latch lever and an engaging portion that is normally disposed within the housing interior; whereby
the clip member is displaced in a first direction relative to the collar member until the housing portion of the collar member engages the first and second cam surfaces;

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further displacement of the clip member in the first direction relative to the collar member causes the housing portion to engage the first and second cam surfaces such that the first and second finger portions are forced together; the engaging portion of the latch portion normally engages the ratchet portion to prevent movement of the clip member in a second direction relative to the collar member, where the second direction is opposite the first direction; and displacement of the latch lever relative to the housing portion causes the engaging portion of the latch portion to disengage from the ratchet portion to allow movement of the clip member in the second direction relative to the collar member.

Claim 16 (new)

16. A clip assembly as recited in claim 15, in which the collar member further comprises a belt portion, where the belt portion of the collar member engages one of the first and second cam surfaces.

Claim 17 (new)

17. A clip assembly as recited in claim 15, in which the engaging portion is formed on a latch projection, where the latch projection and the latch lever extend from the housing.

Claim 18 (new)

18. A clip assembly as recited in claim 16, in which the engaging portion is formed on a latch projection, where the latch projection and the latch lever extend from belt portion of the housing.

Claim 19 (new)

19. A clip assembly as recited in claim 15, in which:
the first and second finger portions define first and second gripping portions, respectively; and
at least one of the first and second gripping portions is configured to grip sheet material.

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Claim 20 (new)

20. A clip assembly as recited in claim 15, in which:
the first and second finger portions define first and second gripping portions,
respectively;
the first and second gripping portions define first and second sets of gripping
teeth; whereby
when the clip member is in the closed configuration, the teeth points of the teeth
in the first set engage interlock with the teeth in the second set.

Claim 21 (new)

21. A clip assembly as recited in claim 15, further comprising a stop projection
arranged to inhibit movement of the clip member relative to the collar member.

Claim 22 (new)

22. A clip assembly as recited in claim 21, in which the collar member is
deformed to allow movement of the clip member in either direction relative to the collar
member.

Claim 23 (new)

23. A method of attaching a structure to a sheet material, comprising the steps
of:
providing a clip member defining a hinge portion, first and second finger portions
extending from the hinge portion, first and second cam surfaces formed on
the first and second finger portions, respectively, and a ratchet portion
formed on at least one of the first and second finger portions;
providing a collar member defining a housing portion, a latch portion, a latch
opening, and a housing interior, where the latch portion defines a latch
lever and an engaging portion that is normally disposed within the housing
interior;
displacing the clip member in a first direction relative to the collar member until
the housing portion of the collar member engages the first and second
cam surfaces;

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further displacing the clip member in the first direction relative to the collar member such that the housing portion engages the first and second cam surfaces such that the first and second finger portions are forced together to grip the sheet material, and the engaging portion of the latch portion engages the ratchet portion to prevent movement of the clip member in a second direction relative to the collar member, where the second direction is opposite the first direction; and displacing the latch lever relative to the housing portion to cause the engaging portion of the latch portion to disengage from the ratchet portion to allow movement of the clip member in the second direction relative to the collar member.

Claim 24 (new)

24. A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising the steps of: forming a belt portion of the collar member; and engaging the belt portion of the collar member with one of the first and second cam surfaces.

Claim 25 (new)

25. A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising the step of forming the engaging portion on a latch projection, where the latch projection and the latch lever extend from the housing.

Claim 26 (new)

26. A clip assembly as recited in claim 24, further comprising the step of forming the engaging portion on a latch projection, where the latch projection and the latch lever extend from the belt portion of the housing.

Claim 27 (new)

27. A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising the steps of: forming first and second gripping portions on the first and second finger portions;

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and
configuring at least one of the first and second gripping portions to grip the sheet material.

Claim 28 (new)

28. A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising the steps of forming first and second sets of gripping on the first and second finger portions, respectively, such that, when the clip member is in the closed configuration, the teeth points of the teeth in the first set engage interlock with the teeth in the second set.

Claim 29 (new)

29. A method as recited in claim 23, further comprising the step of arranging a stop projection to inhibit movement of the clip member relative to the collar member.

Claim 30 (new)

30. A method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the step of deforming the collar member to allow movement of the clip member in either direction relative to the collar member.

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REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (RCE)

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Applicant | Lester R. Greer, Jr. et al. |
| Serial No. | 10/791,482 |
| Filing Date | 03/02/2004 |
| Title | Clip Systems and Methods for Sheet Materials |
| Attorney Docket | P214529 |
| Attorney | MRS:sh |

Enclosed:

1. Request for Continued Examination (RCE) Transmittal;
2. Amendment (2 pages) (4-4-06)
3. Exhibit A (Listing of all Claims and Amendments (12-28-2005)) (6 pages)
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